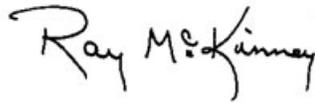


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PROGRAM INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. P06-01



FROM: RAY McKINNEY
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SUBJECT: Compliance with the testing and maintenance requirements of 30 CFR 75.1911(i), Fire suppression systems for diesel-powered equipment and fuel transportation units.

Scope

This Program Information Bulletin (PIB) affects underground coal mine operators, miners and miners' representatives, Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) enforcement personnel, and other interested parties should have this information.

Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to clarify the basic requirement for underground coal mine operators to test and maintain each fire suppression system installed on diesel-powered equipment and fuel transportation units in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations as required in 30 CFR § 75.1911(i). The PIB also is intended to promote consistent enforcement of § 75.1911(i).

Information

MSHA's Section 30 CFR 75.1911 addresses the requirements for installation of fire suppression systems on diesel-powered equipment and fuel transportation units. Section 75.1911(i) reads:

"Each fire suppression system shall be tested and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommended inspection and maintenance program and as required by the nationally recognized independent testing laboratory listing or approval, and be visually inspected at least once each week by a person trained to make such inspections."

The intent of this section is to ensure that persons conducting inspections and maintenance on fire suppression systems on diesel-powered equipment are properly trained to perform such work and have sufficient knowledge to determine whether the system is functioning properly. Adequate testing and maintenance of fire suppression systems is essential because of the distinct part these systems play in suppressing machine fires. Therefore, the testing and maintenance of fire suppression systems must be done in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. These inspection and maintenance procedures are evaluated as part of the system's approval or listing by a nationally recognized independent testing laboratory.

As stated in the preamble discussion to § 75.1911(i), "a person trained to perform the inspection and maintenance on fire suppression systems as required under § 75.1911(i) is not required to be a person qualified under § 75.1915. However, the person performing tests and inspections of fire suppression systems must have sufficient knowledge to determine whether a fire suppression system is functioning properly." 61 FR 55477. "The weekly visual inspection in § 75.1911(i) is not intended to be an in-depth inspection, but a quick check to determine if defects, such as disconnected hose lines or altered nozzles, are readily apparent." 61 FR 55477.

It is the responsibility of underground coal mine operators to ensure that fire suppression systems installed on diesel-powered equipment are in compliance with § 75.1911(i). The decision as to whom will perform the mandated inspection and maintenance on such equipment is within the mine operator's discretion.

Background

A provision within a fire suppression system manufacturer's recommendations restricts and limits the inspection and maintenance of the system to the manufacturer's personnel, authorized distributor personnel, or persons designated by the manufacturer or authorized distributor. However, it appears that neither the manufacturer nor the authorized distributors provide training or designate mine operator's employees to perform the inspections and maintenance of the system. As a result, questions have been raised concerning the interpretation and enforcement of the inspection and maintenance requirements of § 75.1911(i). This bulletin clarifies the compliance responsibilities of underground coal mine operators with § 75.1911(i).

Authority

Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977;
30 CFR Part 75 Subpart T - Diesel Powered Equipment

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Internet Availability

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